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EDITORIAL NOTES

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THOSE who are interested in the progress of secondary education—and all our readers belong to this class—will take much comfort from the resolutions passed unanimously by the Congress of Secondary Education at Paris. There were present 303 delegates, of whom 183 were teachers in the secondary schools of France. The resolutions were as follows: (1) "That secondary education should endeavor to adapt its methods to the diversity of social needs." (2) "That university extension should be of such a character as to instill the scientific spirit into the different classes of society." (3) "That, while still ultimately controlled by the central authority, the management of all secondary establishments should be more largely autonomous, and should give fuller consideration to local conditions." (4) "That secondary teachers should receive a pedagogic education, both theoretical and practical, by means of the history of pedagogy, the discussion of methods, and much practical work." (5) "That the initiative of the pupils themselves should be more and more encouraged by the simplification of programs, by a less rapid succession of subjects, by the more continuous influence of fewer masters, especially in junior classes, and by a more careful adaptation of the system of education to their intellectual powers; and, further, that hand-work and open-air games should be utilized as important means of developing initiative." (6) "That, so far as circumstances allow, women should be associated with men in the education of the child, with a view to bringing about a closer union between the family and the school." (7) "That, inasmuch as the system of international school correspondence—due originally to private initiative, and carried on for more than three years under conditions that have proved to be satisfactory—is an important auxiliary, not only from the point of view of practice in modern languages, but also from the points of view of the general culture of the mind and of international relations, all school authorities should be urged to encourage by every means in their power the further development of the system."

There was much discussion of all these resolutions and a difference of opinion on some of the minor points; the fourth resolution led to one of the best debates of the congress, in the course of which M. Jules Gautier, Inspector of the Academy of Paris, made a telling speech. He said: "The question is not yet solved. The École Normale Supérieure and the Sorbonne are excellent scientific laboratories, but, from the pedagogic point of view, nearly everything has yet to be done. Our teachers are admirably taught, but they teach with only moderate success. We must create in them a more

thoroughly educative state of mind. To be a good educator a man must be acquainted with the psychology of character, the physiology of the body, practical methods of teaching, and the history of what has been accomplished in education from earliest times. Where can this preparation be obtained if not in the universities in the first place, and afterward in probationary courses in schools? When the future teacher has done all this he will be ready to become an educator. He will no longer separate education and instruction. And thus the chief crisis in secondary education will have passed away." These are truly words of encouragement to those in our country who are endeavoring to carry on just such plans of educational study as M. Gautier says are so necessary for the success of the secondary-school teacher in his work. M. Elie Rabier, Director of Secondary Education in France, in speaking to this same resolution, said: "I am of the opinion that the young teachers from the École Normale and the Sorbonne talk over the head of the average pupil. It is just this more complete adaptation of the teacher to the taught that we are anxious to bring about, and this can only be done by a special course of professional training." Here again we have an evil pointed out which is not peculiar to France, but is too prevalent in our own land. It seems as if we forget that in the early days the A.B. degree stood for a certain amount of scholarship and did not confer upon its recipient the *jus docendi*. This came after he had proven his ability to teach. It would be well if we could revert to that method for this learning to teach by teaching under no supervision results only in harm to the pupils, and too often a perpetuation of a bad method of teaching from generation to generation.

THOSE of our readers who have read carefully Mr. J. I. Wyer's contributions each year on the Bibliography of Education will remember that he emphasizes the fact that it is so difficult to find any bibliography of education which will be fairly complete and yet wisely discriminating. The Eastern Association of Teachers of Physics realized this, and appointed a committee on reference books in the department of physics in secondary schools. This committee has just issued a twenty-seven-page pamphlet giving a list of reference books suitable for work in secondary-school physics. This is one of the best contributions to good bibliography in this particular line that we have seen. It is complete, it is discriminating, each book is thoroughly described as regards author, publisher, size, number of pages, date, and price; and following this external description there is an interesting review of the general scope of the work. Not content with subdividing the lists of books under the various headings that are likely to appeal to a teacher of physics, this committee has arranged two selected lists as being especially suitable libraries of physics, the one set of books costing \$25, the other \$50. The secretary of the association, Mr. M. S. Power, Roxbury, Mass., will give any information desired in regard to obtaining copies of this list, and we commend this particularly to the notice of teachers of physics in our high schools.

THE Conservative party in England was returned to power by the unstinted use of the cry for the preservation of the empire, and the misdeeds of the administration were not explained away in a frank and logical manner. This government has been specially neglectful of educational affairs, and had it not been for the glamour of the South African campaign the administration of education would have been an issue of great importance. From the very beginning of the movement for popular education it has been understood that there should be provision made in the elementary schools for the teaching of subjects more advanced than the three R's, inasmuch as the poorer people have not the means to send their children to the private secondary schools known in England as the "public schools." The best proof of the righteousness of such provision is the increasing demand for just such instruction and the excellence of the product of these higher grade board schools. It has remained for Sir John Gorst and the Duke of Devonshire to find out that all this has been illegal and a mighty tempest in education has been stirred up. It is freely charged that the clergy are responsible for this movement because of their fear that their authority in educational matters is on the decline. This diminution of authority has come from the increasing efficiency of the board schools and the inability of the voluntary schools to compete successfully. The influence of those behind the voluntary schools is said to have been exerted upon the government that the board schools might be kept to the level of the voluntary schools. This would be a decided blow to the secondary education in England that is designed for the people of moderate means and would greatly hinder the progress of the country in its competition with other nations on an industrial, commercial, and technical plane. It is this aspect that specially appeals to the average Englishman, and if this policy is persisted in there will be but another argument added to the long list for the disestablishment of the English church. The *Educational News* of Edinburgh has a very strong editorial on the subject in which the writer says of the relationship: "The English clergyman without 'my schools' is like the collier who always felt 'sort of naked-like' without his dog, and to give the church the sense of being properly clad the education of this great country must be sacrificed." Should this prevail the city of London would be the great sufferer.

REFERENCE was made in the October number of the *SCHOOL REVIEW* to some difficulties that various teachers are having in connection with the teaching of rhetoricals in the high school. Letters have been received from a number of teachers confirming the statement that this is a difficult subject to handle, and we shall insert from time to time various remedies that are suggested by those who have communicated with us. Mr. Warren E. Fisher, principal of the high school in Pittsfield, N. H., writes as follows of an interesting experiment which he tried last year, and which proved very satisfactory:

The work is of two kinds: first, the memorizing and delivery of good selections and drill in reading, and second, the "Friday work." For the first work the school

is divided into three divisions, one for each teacher. A period for this work is set apart on Wednesday, the first period one week, the second period the following week, and so on. All the regular recitation work is omitted during the period. Classic selections are given and all are required to learn them. The class is drilled on the delivery of these selections in concert and individually. About half the period is taken up in this way. The remaining part is used for practice in reading, the aim being to drill as much as possible in sight reading.

We gain, I think, three results by this plan : the pupils memorize only the best selections, the somewhat monotonous and not altogether profitable task of learning a formal declamation is avoided, and lastly the drill in reading, which pupils in many high schools lack to such a degree, comes at a time when such work can be better appreciated.

In the "Friday work," as I will call it, the periods are omitted successively, as in the work for Wednesday. The whole school usually takes part, though in a large school divisions might be made. For this work we introduce a variety of exercises. One week we have quotations ; another, interesting events that have recently happened ; another, historical characters or favorite characters in fiction, each one to tell something of these characters. Sometimes the work is in the form of debates on such a question as "*Resolved*, That football is a brutal game." Town meetings are sometimes held, the warrant for the same being made out in legal form and duly posted. The articles in the warrant are discussed by the pupils and adopted or rejected as it seems best.

We have held mock sessions of the house of representatives of the legislature in which bills were introduced, referred to committees, reported on by the committees, and discussed in the house. These are some of the directions the work of Friday takes.

In all this work the aim is to gain freedom of expression ; to get rid of any diffidence that some may have in speaking their own opinions in a public assembly ; to show them what will be expected of them as future citizens.

English composition work is done in connection with the English classes, so that this necessary part of school work is not neglected.

Of course the results may not come up to one's ideal, but I think if faithfully tried the work will interest the pupils and prove beneficial to them in many ways.

A **VERY** interesting and thoughtful address on "Secondary Education in the United States" was delivered on Founder's Day at the Tome Institute, Port Deposit, Md., by the Hon. Charles J. Bonaparte. If space permitted we would like to insert the whole address, but these two extracts will show the trend of his thought, and how keenly alive he is to the work of secondary schools and their relationship to the colleges on the one hand and the education of boys for life on the other :

A very important function of education is to put each man, as nearly as may be, in his proper place relatively to other men. In a primitive society the wise, brave, and strong establish their right to leadership by what may be not inappropriately styled "knock-down arguments." This form of persuasion, though of undoubted efficacy, has two rather serious drawbacks : its application usually involves more or less smashing of glass and china, or, in some other form, material waste and damage to the community, and it can be applied only by those in the maturity of their strength, so that a man must spend precious years of manhood in proving that he is fit to lead before he

can lead in fact. As we have become less primitive, we have sought to diminish the cost and advance the time of this process of natural selection, and to these ends we substitute, so far as we can, a struggle for leadership between children at school for a similar struggle between grown men in after life. It seems, to me at least, obvious that a contest of this nature will the better accomplish its purpose the more nearly it is open to all, the more fairly all enter upon it, and the more promptly and decisively in the process of further education its lessons are recognized and applied. To be slightly more specific, the more boys attend this school the greater the probability that among them may be found some who will not waste their time at Johns Hopkins or Yale, Princeton or Harvard; the more nearly equal their chances of distinction here, the surer will be the test thus afforded of their fitness for the training there given, and the more readily and practically parents and guardians, as well as children themselves, accept the truth that mediocrity and indolence, however harmless or however gilded, are out of place in the higher education, the better it will be for our colleges and universities, our schools of law and medicine and professional labor in other fields, the better for those who annually leave these for their life work, and the better for the American people.

Of late years the choice of a suitable curriculum for secondary schools has been rendered decidedly more difficult by the great development of the "Elective System" in our leading universities, and perhaps the most serious problem presented to teachers in such schools is how to deal with this difficulty. Any reasonable hope of a satisfactory solution must be founded on accurate knowledge of the problem's conditions, and sometimes these seem to be strangely misapprehended. The essence of the elective system consists in a double admission on the part of the universities adopting it; first, that they can no longer prescribe an "all-round" course of collegiate studies, *ex necessitate rei* a choice of branches to be pursued and branches to be neglected must now be made in the case of each graduate; second, that this choice can be made better by the student himself than by his college or university. Of these propositions the former is, for practical purposes, no longer disputed anywhere, and, indeed, its truth seems, as the French say, "to leap into the eyes;" acquiescence in the latter is by no means so general or so unqualified, but the example and the experience of Harvard and the earnest and persistent advocacy of President Eliot are telling steadily and surely in other seats of learning. It seems obvious that the grave revolution in college methods and traditions involved in their general and practical acceptance must, on the one hand, oblige secondary schools to do no small part of the work once allotted to colleges, and, on the other, tend strongly to remove the distinction between "preparatory" and other secondary schools, and to render every secondary school, at least of the higher grade, to some extent a "feeder" for colleges. Since a boy at college will pursue but a small fraction of the studies with all of which an educated man must have at least *some* acquaintance, the indispensable *modicum* of instruction in the branches he will lay aside must be imparted before he goes to college, and, as these cannot be, or ought not to be, known in advance, a very broad scheme of instruction must be adopted by the special preparatory schools, a scheme leading them away from fellowship with "crammers" and towards uniformity of system with schools of substantially the same grade, not primarily preparatory.